Date: November 27, 2023

To: All Research and Laboratory Staff

Subject: Expectations for Research and Laboratory Safety Compliance

As we continue to pursue innovation and excellence in our research and laboratory endeavors, it is imperative that we maintain the highest standards of safety and compliance. The safety of our faculty, staff, and students as well as the integrity of our research, and the protection of our environment are paramount concerns for our organization.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of our commitment to safety and to set clear expectations regarding research and laboratory safety compliance. Each member of our team plays a vital role in ensuring that our work is conducted in a manner that minimizes risks and adheres to all applicable regulations and guidelines.

* **Safety Culture**: We must foster a culture of safety where everyone feels responsible for their own safety and the safety of their colleagues. Safety should always be a top priority, regardless of the urgency or importance of the research. Everyone has a role in creating a safe work environment.
* **Training**: All employees are expected to undergo appropriate safety training and maintain up-to-date certifications. Training requirements will be regularly reviewed and enforced.
* **Risk Assessment**: Before any experiment or procedure, a thorough risk assessment must be conducted to identify potential hazards and to develop strategies to mitigate them.
* **Safety Equipment**: It is mandatory to use all required engineering controls, administrative controls as well as personal protective equipment. This includes but is not limited to fume hoods and other types of ventilation, lab coats, gloves, safety goggles, and respirators.
* **Chemical Management**: Proper handling, storage, and disposal of chemicals is non-negotiable. Labels must always be accurate and legible indicating the hazards, and Safety Data Sheets (SDS) should be readily available for reference while in the work area.
* **Equipment Maintenance**: Laboratory equipment must be maintained in good working order, and regular checks should be performed to ensure their proper functioning. Old or broken equipment should be decontaminated and properly discarded, or tagged and placed out of service until repairs are completed.
* **Emergency Procedures**: All lab personnel must be familiar with emergency procedures, including the location and proper use of safety showers, eyewash stations, spill kits, fire extinguishers, and emergency exits.
* **Incident Reporting**: Any accidents, near-misses, or safety concerns should be reported promptly to supervisors, risk management, TUPD, and/or [concerns@tulane.edu](mailto:concerns@tulane.edu). Employee injuries should be reported to Corvel at 1-855-433-9938. We encourage an environment where reporting is encouraged and not met with punitive measures.
* **Compliance with Regulations**: We are committed to complying with all relevant local, state, and federal regulations and guidelines pertaining to laboratory safety, including those related to the handling of hazardous materials, disposal of waste, fire codes, electrical codes, and OSHA standards.
* **Continuous Improvement**: We will regularly review and assess our safety protocols and procedures to identify opportunities for improvement. Your feedback and suggestions are invaluable in this process.

We recommend that you promptly begin assessing areas in and around your designated laboratory spaces to ensure compliance with these expectations. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety has provided a [checklist](https://tulane.box.com/s/pumasnsg6phlposw6jigbgwbs44dg60l) to facilitate this assessment and will be available to answer any questions. OEHS will also conduct periodic inspections of all laboratory buildings and spaces to ensure compliance. All equipment and other items stored in exit corridors, hallways or in front of electrical panels will be removed after notification by designated facilities representatives.

We cannot allow research to continue in spaces that have been identified as unsafe. Non-compliance with safety procedures can result in decommissioning and shutdown of laboratory spaces and work areas or disciplinary action up to and including termination. These issues are serious, and we rely on each of you to uphold these standards.

We want to express our gratitude for your ongoing dedication to our mission and your commitment to ensuring the safety of our research and laboratory environments. Together, we can achieve our ambitious goals while maintaining the highest standards of safety and compliance.

If you have any questions or concerns related to laboratory safety, please do not hesitate to reach out to your supervisor or the Office of Environmental Health and Safety at [OEHS@tulane.edu](mailto:OEHS@tulane.edu).

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Robin Forman, *Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost*  
Patrick Norton, *Senior Vice President & Chief Operating Officer*